Samuel Charlesworth

"The mighty dead
"Who blessed mankind and humanised the world."

THE CHRISTIAN FREEMAN
AND
Record of Unitarian Worthies

BEING A HISTORY OF THE UNITARIAN REFORMATION OF RELIGION IN EUROPE AND AMERICA DURING THE LAST THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS.

With some Account of the most Notable Works written by Unitarians.

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WOMAN'S FIDELITY.

Perhaps no misfortune is so deserving the gentler offices of love and pity, and yet is made to feel so keenly the friendlessness of human society, as insanity. Many persons who extend the free hand of duty in ordinary cases of affliction exhibit a decided moral shrinking when brought into association with the insane. "Stay with me! stay with me! comfort me!" Dr. Johnson used to appeal to his friends during the dejection and gloom of his morning hours. He once said: "I would consent to have my arm amputated if it would raise my spirits." But the friends of Dr. Johnson's brilliant evenings were always more numerous than those of his irritable mornings.

The world has produced a few great natures who have so studied insanity as to know how to sympathise with the insane. Among the worthy exceptions is Pinel, the learned French physician, who deserves no ordinary rank among the world's benefactors. There are few pictures, whether of virgin, martyr, or saint, that so teach the lesson of love that Christ taught humanity, as that which hangs in the great hall of the French Academy of Medicine, representing the resolute and benevolent Frenchman striking off the chains that encumbered the limbs of the multitudinous patients confined in the Bicetre Hospital in Paris. "Are you mad yourself, that you propose to set these wild people at liberty?" asked the President of the Commune of Paris on the memorable occasion that the picture celebrates. "I would get them free," said Pinel mildly, "that they may cease to be wild people."

Margaret Fuller Ossoli, in her essay on "Woman's Influence on the Insane," has indicated one of the great missions that woman is especially fitted to perform. Insanity requires the ministry of gentle and loving natures, and women have always proved the best and truest friends in mental distress. "Lear had one Cordelia," said George III.; "I have three." The sympathy of Queen Charlotte and of the daughters of the king during his malady, at the old palace at Kew, are among the finest things in the history of the royal family.

Such women are benefactors, almoners of the sweetest charities that can be offered mankind. They plant roses in the deserts of life, and set stars in impenetrable glooms; and, better than all, they follow in this choice ministry of sympathy the example of Christ, who never withheld his compassion from a scene of mental suffering, from the man that was lunatic to the poor wanderers among the tombs.

Mary Unwin had neither wealth nor royal blood. She endowed no churches, was the almoner of no great benefaction; she was not even a literary lady, and yet she holds a place in the affections of every lover of philanthropy and poetry, and deserves a high rank among the noblest English women. She sacrificed her own comfort to administer to the distressed mind of Cowper, whose better and clearer thoughts have comforted mankind and added a lustre to Christianity throughout the world.

Most of our readers have listened with wonder and delight to the highly impassioned and intellectual music of Robert Schumann, and have heard of the marvelous playing of Clara Schumann, his gifted wife and widow. Clara Schumann may be great as a pianist, but those who know her domestic history must ever hold her to be greater in womanly sympathy and devotion and in true moral worth. Without the sympathetic heart of Mary Unwin the genius of Cowper would not

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add its light to our fireside; without the living devotion of Clara Schumann the sweet sounds that delight us, sway our thoughts and awaken our most pleasurable emotions as we gather around the piano at evening, might never have fallen on our ears.

There lies before us a letter from Leipsic, which affords a glance at her inner life: "I have just returned from a concert," says the writer, "at which I heard Clara Schumann play some of her husband's wonderful compositions. In rendering highly intellectual music she is the greatest of German pianists, and she commands popular respect and admiration as a woman, for she remained faithful to her husband in the darkest period of his dejection. Some of Schumann's best compositions were written in the lucid intervals of madness. I have heard that Clara Schumann used sometimes to play all night for him to lighten his glooms."

The great overshadowing misfortune of Schumann's life was long concealed, his wife guarding the terrible secret with jealous care. Those who saw them in public and bestowed upon the composer and his interpreter their warm and liberal applause, little dreamed of the awful shadow that was eclipsing their happiness. His mind for a time seemed poising between transcendentalism and insanity, but with the first check of his fame it became a chaos, though still tuneful with the fragmentary mysteries of song.

Clara Schumann accepted the duty of watching over his shattered intellect as one of the offices of love. His mental delusion at times assumed a most painful form; he believed himself separated from his wife, though she was ever at his side, her gentle hand anticipating every want.

Sick or well in mind, he was still absorbed in music. When his brain could get no rest music still solaced him. His wife devoted her musical gifts solely to administering comfort to his mind, trying to charm away the evil genius that possessed it, like David playing before Saul. Her music was suited to all his moods; in his darkest periods she would sometimes play for him the whole night long. He believed that the spirits of Schubert and Beethoven were with him, inspiring him to write, and whatever he wrote she must play.

He had intervals of sanity that lasted half a year. They were wholly devoted to composition. He worked with a self-consuming zeal. "A long life is mine," he said, "but it must be lived in a few years."

His case at last became very distressing, and the watchful devotion of his wife increased with the terrible necessities of the occasion. In the winter of 1854, two years before his decease, he was one day missing. Some hours afterwards his body was seen floating in the Rhine. He was rescued from the nearly fatal suicidal attempt and restored.

Watched over to the last by his devoted wife, he soon after sunk serenely to rest—his earthly music done, the long period of agony ended.

The grave has just closed over Louisa Muehlbach, the most popular of German female writers, and one of the most amiable, accomplished, and singularly industrious women of the present century. She aspired to do for Germany what the genius of Sir Walter Scott did for Scotland, in making the romance of her history familiar to the world. She wrote more than one hundred volumes of historical stories; her works found millions of readers and have been translated into nearly every civilised tongue.

But Madame Muehlbach had her discipline in life, and she endured her trial like the heroines of whom she was best pleased to write. Her lamented husband, Prof. Theodore Mundt, became shattered in body and fearfully clouded in mind during the last years of his life, and it became her duty to watch over the wreck of his fine intellect, and to administer to his depressed spirits, from the beginning of the calamity until death closed the scene. For long months she took upon herself the duty of a nurse, and watched faithfully by his bedside. No consideration of literary fame or profit turned her aside from the way of true devotion. If she wrote, it was in his room. She composed some of her best works during these long night watches, thus employing her pen as an assistant in the duties of a higher calling. The measure of her fame was equalled by her true womanly greatness as a wife and mother.

As Cowper wrote of Mary Unwin in the evening of his overcast life:

"There is a book
By seraphs writ in beams of heavenly light,
On which the eyes of God not rarely look,
A chronicle of actions just and bright.
There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine,
And since thou hast that praise, I spare thee mine."

H. BUTTERWORTH.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST.

KESHUB CHUNDER SEN.

THERE is an infinite diversity of opinions among Indian Theists respecting Jesus of Nazareth, ranging from intense hatred on the one hand to profound reverence and personal attachment on the other. Not a few there are who look upon him with almost the same spirit of sectarian antipathy and abhorrence as Hindus. Such ideas are happily dying out. *The vast majority of our brethren of the liberal school cherish respect and gratitude towards Christ,* AND SOME EVEN ACCEPT HIM AS A GUIDE AND MASTER. We have no desire to enter into a theological controversy on this subject, but we think it necessary to say a few words to point out the manner in which we accept Christ, so as to make him unto us not a source of wranglings and disputes, but of life, strength, and righteousness. We Theists must take it to be foreign to our purpose to canvas the thousand theories which have been propounded about him and his creed; but surely it is our interest and duty to receive from him that healthy moral influence which he is appointed in God's economy to exercise on the world, to love him and revere him and follow his teachings and example. We must remember that there is a bodily Christ and a spiritual Christ, a local Christ and a universal Christ, a dead Christ and a living Christ. Orthodox Christians may deal with the former and seek revelation and salvation in the visible and tangible incidents of the Christ that was. But our business is with the spiritual, universal, and living Christ. What shall we do with the *body*? We want the *spirit*. Not the son of man but the son of God in Christ is needful for our salvation. In the purely human Christ we can hardly feel any interest; but the divine elements of his character come home to every "man's bosom and business," and are of the highest importance to our redemption as involving the eternal and universal principles of ethics. He does not come to us as God, the Father, Ruler, and Saviour, in human form; he is not an advocate or intercessor striving to appease an angry deity; he does not present himself to us as an external fact to be believed on historical testimony; nor is he to us a mere good man who lived a pious life and died a noble death. Christ stands before us always as an incarnation of faith and loyalty to God, an example of self-sacrificing devotion to truth; he is to be accepted in spirit and converted into an internal fact of our life; he is to live in us perpetually as the spirit of godliness. We do not care to believe in the outward and dead Nazarene, or make a declaration of such belief in an orthodox style. But we do care to assimilate the spirit of Christ to our souls. We must eat the flesh and drink the blood of the spiritual Christ, and thus incorporate into our spiritual constitution the principles of faith and sacrifice, love and obedience, which he embodied. Thus the spirit of Christ shall constantly abide in us as the living Christ; thus instead of adoring him or praying to him, we shall ever strive to enter into deeper communion with his spirit, and to advance nearer and nearer to the Infinite Father with the spirit of that holy brother's faith and love growing within us.

ANGEL FACES.

"I have not seen her now for a great many years; but *with that same face*, whatever change she may pretend to find in it, *she will go to Heaven*; for it is the face of her spirit. A good heart never grows old."—*Autobiography of Leigh Hunt.*

We see them with us here,
Bright, happy faces, fraught with smiles and mirth,
Yet too perceptibly the traits of earth
Alloy those features dear.

Infancy passes by;
The mother's wondering eyes behold no more
Her baby's backward glances to the shore
Of preëxistence high.

Childhood, alas, declines;
Vanished too soon the genuine glow of youth,
There lives upon the brow life's sad, stern truth,
Stamped in deep furrowed lines.

We see them pass away—
Pass with pale faces; not, indeed, the same,
But innocent as when to earth they came
On life's first opening day.

The signs of pain and care
Are lost in that we feel 's an angel smile;
The marks of worldliness, of sin, of guile—
Not one of them is there!

We close them from our sight,
Yet never can forget. We seem to know
How fairly those transfigured ones will show
Up to their home of light.

Passed quite beyond our ken,
Still there was *something*, so that we could trace
How Death's strong magic makes an angel face
Out of the face of men.

And there are some, though few,
Who never soil on earth Heaven's virgin page;
Who keep unchanged, through every upward stage,
Childhood's own spotless hue.

So beautiful and good,
We feel that all unaltered they might stand
Amid the ranks of the redeemed band,
As here with us they stood.

They need not our poor prayers;
They call for thanks to Heaven, whose love untold
Allowed our hearts awhile the bliss to hold
Those "angels unawares!"

—*Chambers' Journal.*

WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

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REMEMBER.—Eminence is not to be reached by a frantic struggle after eminence. The road to it is much more common-place. He that would dazzle must dig.

THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.—The Dean of Canterbury, when speaking in defence of his action in the joint communion matter, rather startled his Church audience by giving it as his opinion that "an established Church is not altogether a gain."

A CANDID HISTORIAN.—There was some agreeable company at the house; amongst them a lady, very well read, the daughter of a bishop, who told me she had never heard the name of Dr. Channing! I gave her a great shock by telling her I was a Unitarian.—*Life of William H. Prescott.*

GOETHE ON CHRISTIANITY.—In his last illness, Goethe is reported to have said: "Let mental culture go on advancing; let the natural sciences go on gaining in depth and breadth, and the human mind expand as it may—it will never go beyond the elevation and moral culture of Christianity as it glistens and shines forth in the Gospel."

RELIGIOUS PROGRESS.—The *Piccolo* says that the Convent of San Domenico, in Puebla, Mexico, which for two centuries was the seat of the Inquisition, has been converted into a Protestant temple. During the alterations numerous holes or wells were found, in which were the skeletons of the victims condemned to death by the Inquisition. Some of the victims were found still chained to the walls, and these have been photographed, so that the Mexicans will not easily forget the infamy of the Spanish clerical domination.

VERY TRUE.—The *Jewish Times* thinks that denominational distinctions are becoming more and more obnoxious to the public generally, and adds that "the religious question is looming up more and more as the real question of the day; the spirits of the past refuse to descend to the grave to which they will ultimately be consigned beyond a chance of resurrection; the Pope holds on to his empire with the grasp of despair, but he finds no longer a kaiser that will do his bidding, or a united people that fear his thunders. The little Popes of other orthodox creeds imitate their prototype, but with no better success. The truth cannot be buried, nor defeated, but grows stronger in the contest."

LAY PREACHING.—Count von Bermstorff says upon lay preaching:—"(1) That the 'preaching by laymen'—that is, the publishing of God's word by gifted members of the congregation who do not bear a clerical character—is in accordance with Holy Writ. (2) It corresponds to the practice of the first Christian community. (3) It is founded on the principles of the Reformation. (4) It receives the sanction of God in the blessings that the Lord has lately conferred upon it. (5) Its universal recognition will certainly elevate Christian life. (6) It shall not encroach upon the public pastoral duties, but in conjunction with it, it shall seek its task in small meetings of awakened Christians and in the conversion of unbelievers. (7) To effect this successfully pastors are desired to favour this work and remove unnecessary obstacles in the way of the evangelists. On the other hand, the members of the congregation are to bear in mind that they must act in perfect harmony with the pastors, and follow their advice."

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION.—Dean Stanley does not believe in apostolic succession. In the sermon preached by him in Edinburgh he showed as a matter of history that there are no successors to the apostles. These died and appointed no one in their stead.

A WISE CONCLUSION.—The world failing to end in accordance with the last prediction of the Adventists, their newspaper organ, *The Watchman's Cry*, comes out in new type and every preparation for permanence. "After all," says its editor, "may it not be true that we are the simple-minded, foolish people the world at large esteems us to be, and our hopes a mere dream?"

A MELANCHOLY EPITAPH.—A contemporary says of Strauss, too truly, his tombstone may well bear this dreary inscription: "He had little faith in the Fatherhood of God or the brotherhood of mankind, and did not believe in the life everlasting." With respect for his great learning, and honour for his brave sincerity, should be united deep pity for his sorrows and disappointments in life, and the darkness in which he died.

WAITING FOR THE SHADOW.—The people of the East measure time by the length of their shadow. Hence, if you ask a man what o'clock it is, he goes into the sun, stands erect, looks where his shadow ends, then he measures the length with his feet, and tells you nearly the time. So this illustrates the passage in Job vii. 2: "As a servant earnestly desireth his shadow;" for a workman, wishing to be through his toils, says! "How long my shadow is in coming!" If he is asked, "Why did you not come sooner?" he replies: "Because I waited for my shadow."

INTERESTING TO UNITARIANS.—The following inscription occurs on the flyleaf of the copy of Servetus' *Christianismi Restitutio* that is preserved in the British Museum:—"The fate of this work has been not a little singular. All the copies, except one, were burned along with the author, by the implacable Calvin. This copy was secreted and saved by D. Colladon, one of the judges. After passing through the library of the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel it came into the hands of Dr. Mead, who endeavoured to give a quarto edition of it; but before it was nearly half completed it was seized by John Kent, messenger of the press, and Wm. Squire, messenger in ordinary, on the 27th of May, 1723, at the instance of Dr. Gibson, Bishop of London, and burned, a very few copies excepted. The late Duke de Valière gave near four hundred guineas for this copy, and at his sale it brought 3810 livres. It contains the first account of the circulation of the blood, above seventy years before the immortal Harvey published his discovery. See pp. 169 to 177." [We suppose the Museum copy is the one which the duke bought. It is a reprint from the edition of 1553, and was printed at Nuremberg in 1791.]

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